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AUTHORITY

**JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY<sup>™</sup> PART THREE**

# QUASAR

The *Overmind* has possessed the *Squadron Supreme*; the *Stranger's* laboratory subjects have escaped; and the *Watchers* are dying.

Mom said there'd be days like this.



MIGNOLA  
1980

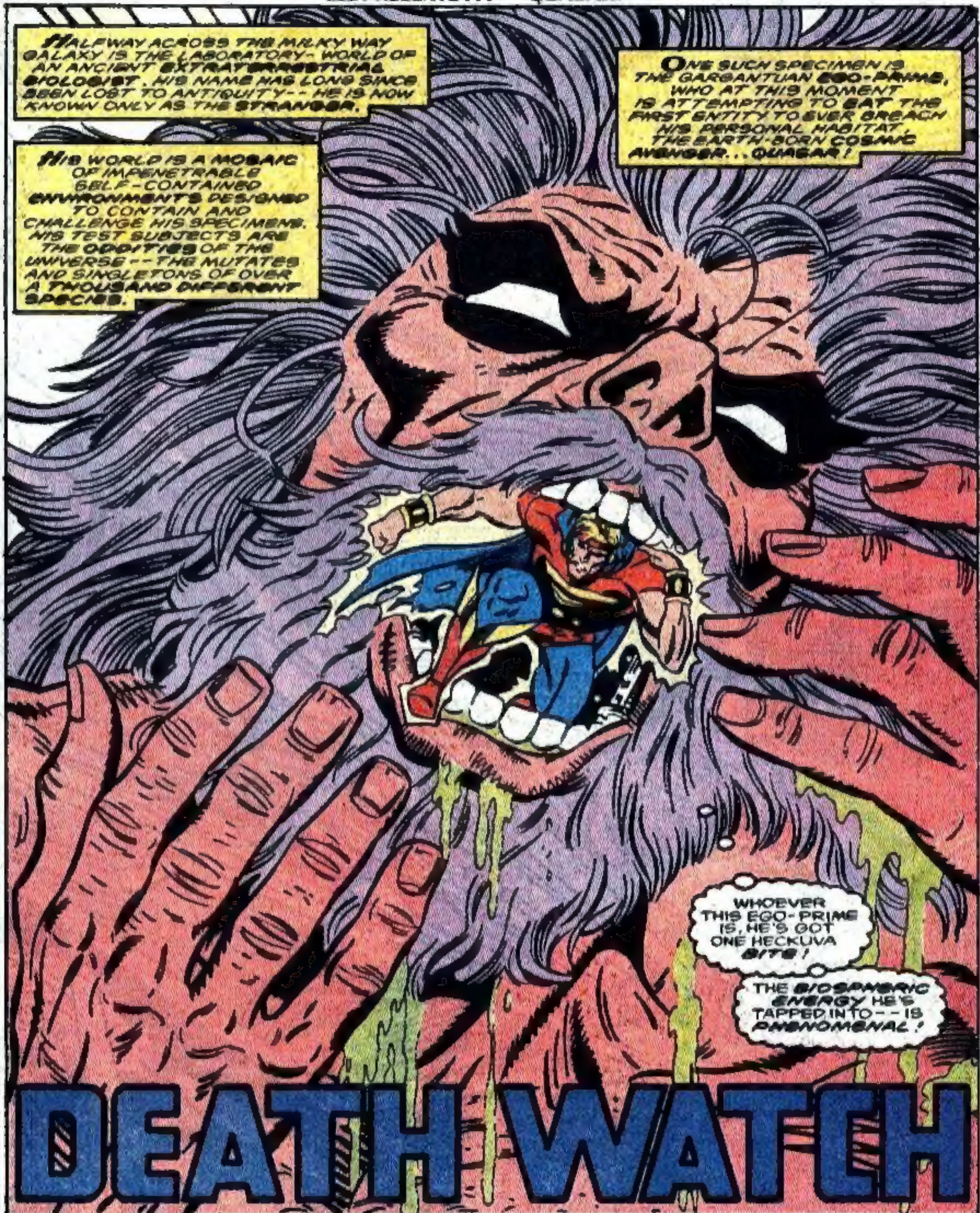


**WENDELL VAUGHN... THE FIRST EARTH MAN EVER APPOINTED PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE. BONDED TO THE ENERGY-TRANSFORMING QUANTUM-BANDS THAT ARE BOTH WEAPONS AND SYMBOLS OF HIS STATION, HE FIGHTS AN ONGOING BATTLE TO DEFEND ALL LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE FROM COSMIC EVIL!**  
**LEE PRESENTS... QUASAR!**

**HALFWAY ACROSS THE MILKY WAY GALAXY IS THE LABORATORY-WORLD OF AN ANCIENT EXTRATERRESTRIAL BIOLOGIST. HIS NAME HAS LONG SINCE BEEN LOST TO ANTIQUITY-- HE IS NOW KNOWN ONLY AS THE STRANGER.**

**HIS WORLD IS A MOSAIC OF IMPENETRABLE SELF-CONTAINED ENVIRONMENTS DESIGNED TO CONTAIN AND CHALLENGE HIS SPECIMENS. HIS TEST SUBJECTS ARE THE ODDITIES OF THE UNIVERSE-- THE MUTATES AND SINGLETONS OF OVER A THOUSAND DIFFERENT SPECIES.**

**ONE SUCH SPECIMEN IS THE GARGANTUAN EGO-PRIME, WHO AT THIS MOMENT IS ATTEMPTING TO EAT THE FIRST ENTITY TO EVER BREACH HIS PERSONAL HABITAT, THE EARTH-BORN COSMIC AVENGER... QUASAR!**



WHOEVER THIS EGO-PRIME IS, HE'S GOT ONE HECKUVA SITE!

THE BIOSPHERIC ENERGY HE'S TAPPED INTO-- IS PHENOMENAL!

# DEATHWATCH

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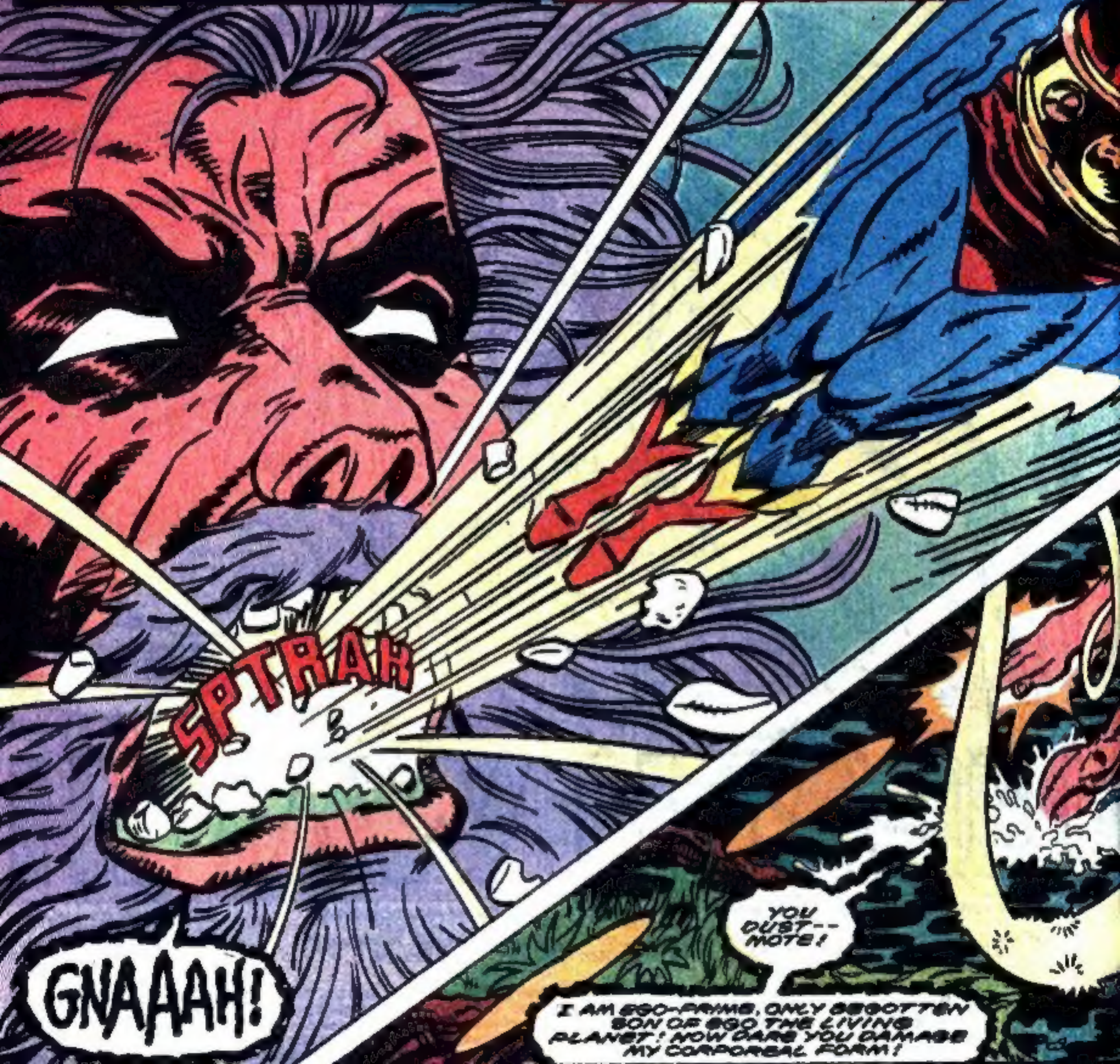
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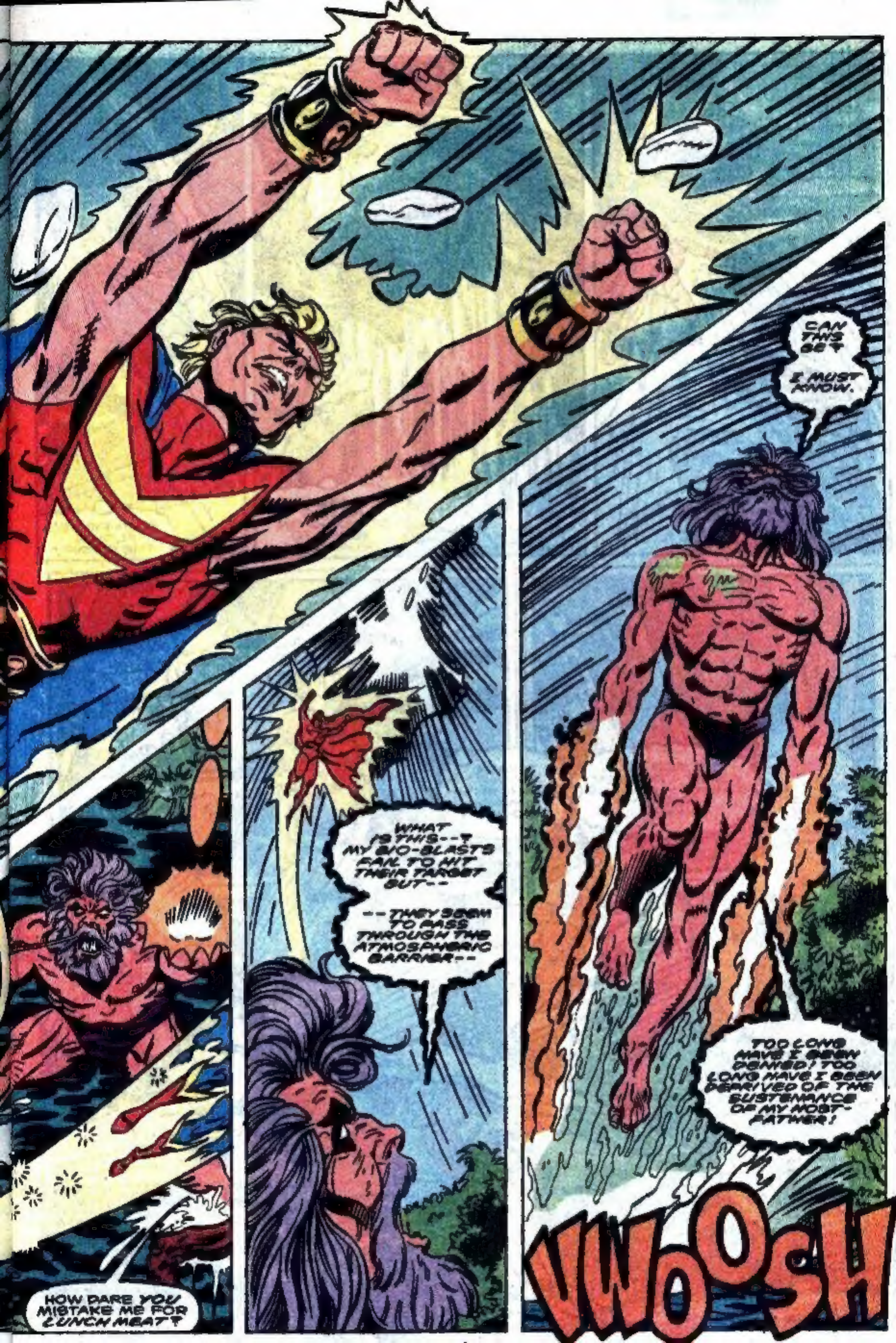


GNAAAH!

YOU DUST--NOTE!

I AM EGO-PRIME, ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF EGO THE LIVING PLANET! NOW DARE YOU DAMAGE MY CORPOREAL FORM!





CAN THIS BE?  
I MUST KNOW.

WHAT IS THIS--?  
MY BIO-BLASTS FAIL TO HIT THEIR TARGET BUT--  
--THEY SEEM TO PASS THROUGH THE ATMOSPHERIC BARRIER--

TOO LONG HAVE I BEEN DENIED! TOO LONG HAVE I BEEN DEPRIVED OF THE SUSTENANCE OF MY MOST-FATHER!

HOW DARE YOU MISTAKE ME FOR LUNCH MEAT?

WOOOSH





HEY! WHAT--? MR. DREADLOCKS SEEMS TO HAVE FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT ME!

NOT THAT I'M COMPLAINING!



WAVOA!

THE ISLAND HE WAS STANDING ON SEEMS TO BE ALIVE!



EGO-PRIME'S FLOWN THE COOP!



HEY-- HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE!

I SEE AT LEAST A DOZEN ENERGY TRAILS STREAKING SKYWARD!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE-- A MASS EXODUS?



HMMM, NOBODY I KNOW.



IN PARTICULAR, I DON'T SEE THE EX-SQUADRON SURVIVORS-- THE GUYS WHOSE KIDNAPPING BROUGHT ME TO THIS CRAZY PLANET IN THE FIRST PLACE!

WONDER IF MY TRAVELING COMPANIONS MARRARI AND HYPERION, HAD ANY BETTER LUCK THAN I DID...?

CAN'T SEE THEIR SIGNAL-BEACONS ANYWHERE.



ELSEWHERE ON THE PLANETOID...



THE BOOSTER IS DOWN, FELLOW TRYKON.

AS IS THE FORCE-BARRIER CONTAINING US.

COME! THE UNIVERSE AWAITS!

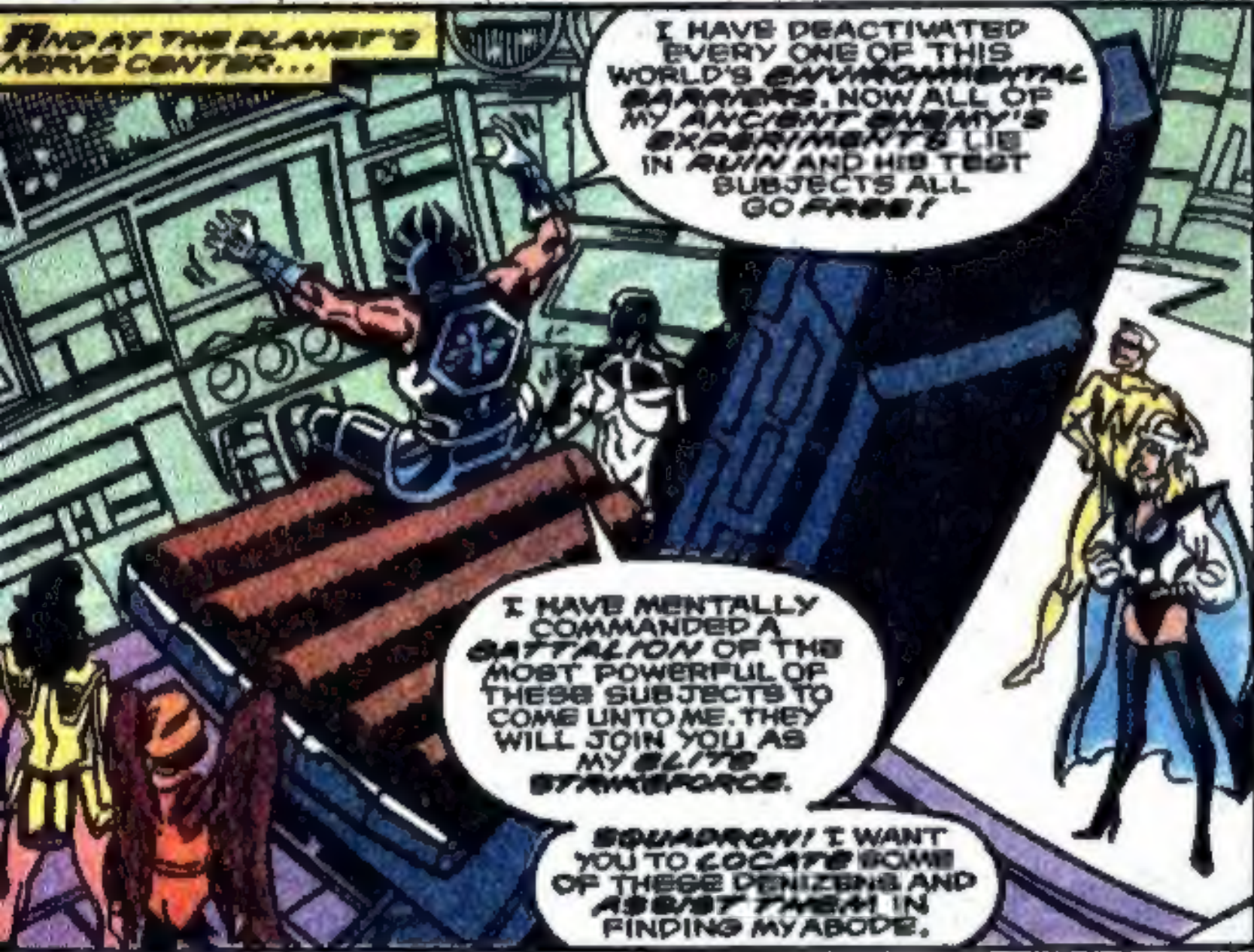
FIND STILL ELSEWHERE...



3-0-5-2

DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY'RE CRAFTING ABOUT SO EXCITEDLY, BUT AT LEAST THEY'VE STOPPED HUMILIATING ME LONG ENOUGH TO CATCH MY BREATH!

FIND AT THE PLANET'S NERVE CENTER...



I HAVE DEACTIVATED EVERY ONE OF THIS WORLD'S ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS. NOW ALL OF MY ANCIENT ENEMY'S EXPERIMENTS LIE IN RUIN AND HIS TEST SUBJECTS ALL GO FREE!

I HAVE MENTALLY COMMANDED A BATTALION OF THE MOST POWERFUL OF THESE SUBJECTS TO COME UNTO ME. THEY WILL JOIN YOU AS MY ELITE STRIKEFORCE.

SQUADRON! I WANT YOU TO LOCATE SOME OF THESE DENIZENS AND ASSIST THEM IN FINDING MY ABODE.

YES, SPECTRUM?

I KNOW WHAT MIGHT HELP THEM FIND THIS PLACE, OVERMIND!



YES, PROCEED.

A SHORT TIME LATER...



HEY-- WHAT THE HECK'S THAT?

A BIG FLOATING GOLD ARROW, HUH?

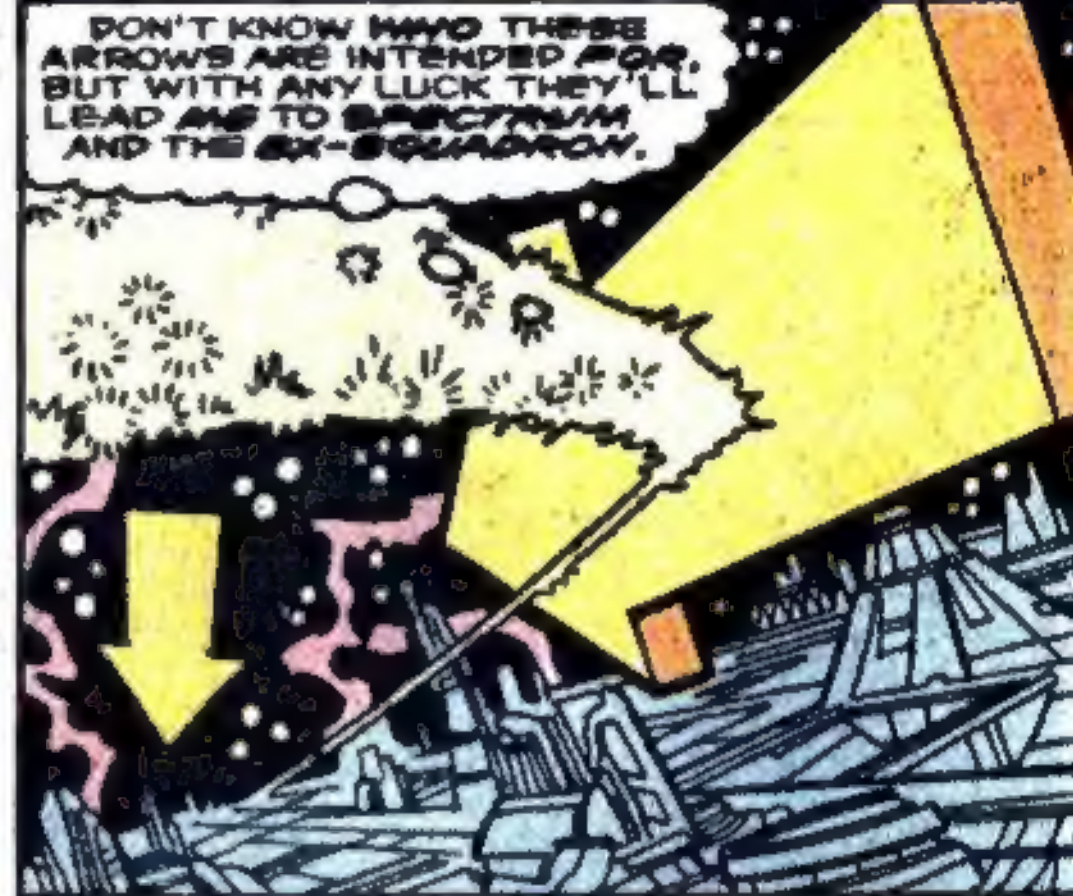
ON THIS PLANET, NOTHING SURPRISES ME ANYMORE.





LET ME ANALYZE THE THING, AND SEE WHAT'S--

HMMH! DOCTOR SPECTRUM'S ENERGY SIGNATURE!



DON'T KNOW HOW THESE ARROWS ARE INTENDED FOR, BUT WITH ANY LUCK THEY'LL LEAD ME TO SPECTRUM AND THE EX-SQUADRON.



AND SOON...

WHO'S THIS? HE SEEMS TO SPEAK ENGLISH!

YOU! THE MAN FROM EARTH!

SORRY TO BARGE IN LIKE THIS, SIR-- BUT I'M LOOKING FOR SOME REMNANTS OF MINE...



I WAS UNABLE TO MENTALLY DOMINATE HIM LAST TIME, BUT PERHAPS HERE AT POINT BLANK RANGE--!

LOOK, I'M AVAILABLE TO MENTAL TAKEOVER--

\* ISSUE # 18.



--AND I RESSENT ANYBODY WHO TRIES IT! SO COOL IT WITH THAT CRUD--NOW!





VERY WELL. THEN THERE IS SOMETHING I WANT YOU TO DO FOR ME OF YOUR OWN VOLITION.

YEAH, RIGHT. HOW ABOUT AN INTRODUCTION FIRST, WHISKERS.

I AM THE OVERMAN, SOLE SURVIVOR OF THE STRANGERS OF EYVING, THE GREATEST CIVILIZATION THIS UNIVERSE HAS YET TO SEE.

I ASKED YOUR NAME, NOT YOUR BIOGRAPHY.



YOU ARE AN IMPERTINENT WHELP... GURBAR.

WISH I COULD MAKE MY MIND PROOF AGAINST SCANNING, TOO.

NOW THEN, I WISH FOR YOU TO LEAVE THIS WORLD, FIND THE STRANGER, AND BRING HIM HERE.

WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE-- YOUR STRAND BOY?



IF YOU DO NOT, THE SQUADRON WILL SUFFER INSTANTANEOUS BRAIN DEATH.

SO THIS GUY KIDNAPPED THE SQUADRON-- AND HERE I THOUGHT IT WAS THE STRANGER...!



WHAT'S YOUR ~~DEE~~ WITH HIM?

WE ARE ANCESTRAL ENEMIES. THAT'S ALL YOU NEED KNOW NOW GO.

OKAY, I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO.

THAT PSIONIC PSYCHIC KNOWS I WON'T RISK THE SQUADRON'S DEATHS.

DO NOT FEAR ME, WHELP!



WONDER IF HE INTENDS TO ~~OUR~~ IT OUT WITH THE STRANGER. HIS FUNERAL.

GUAR TO SON, I NEED SOME INFO.

THE STRANGER'S NOT AT HIS HOMEBASE. I NEED TO FIND HIM. CAN YOU HELP?



YES, HERE ARE HIS PRESENT GALACTIC COORDINATES...

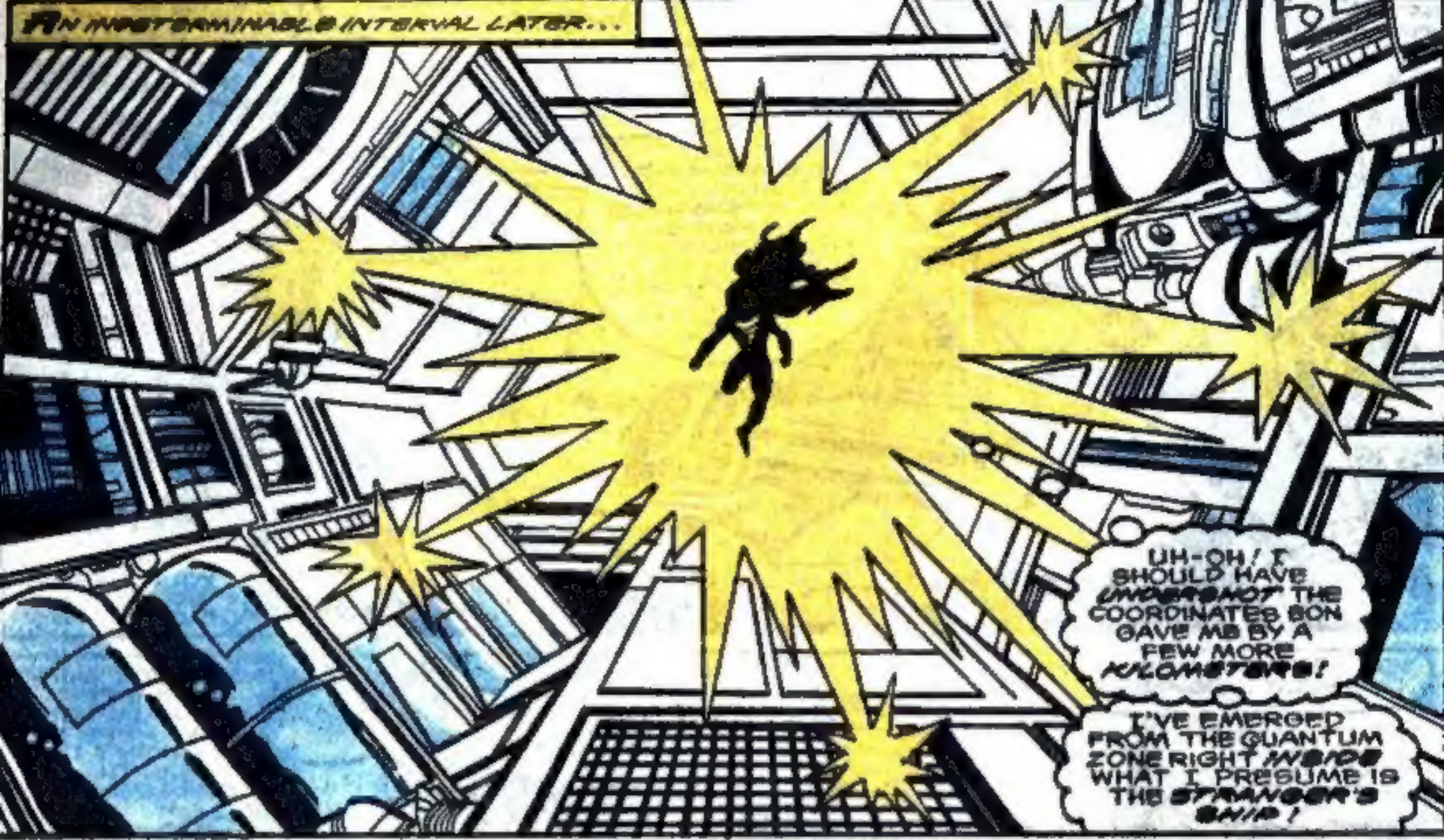
THAT WAS QUICK.

INFORMATION PERTAINING TO COSMOS-CLASS ENTITIES IS MORE READILY DISCOVERABLE TO ME THAN CERTAIN OTHER KINDS.

IF YOU SAY SO, TALK TO YOU LATER-- GOT TO QUANTUM-JUMP!



FIN INDETERMINABLE INTERVAL LATER...



UH-OH! I SHOULD HAVE ~~UNDERSTOOD~~ THE COORDINATES SON GAVE ME BY A FEW MORE KILOMETERS!

I'VE EMERGED FROM THE QUANTUM ZONE RIGHT ~~INSIDE~~ WHAT I PRESUME IS THE STRANGER'S SHIP!



GRAVITATIONAL EFFECTS OF A ~~HARD-~~ HOLE SO CLOSE TO THIS MUCH MATTER WREAKING HAVOC-- ~~MALODING~~ TOWARD ME!

I GUESS IF I EVER NEEDED A REMINDER WHY I CAN'T PULL THIS STUNT IN ~~PLANETARY~~ ATMOSPHERES-- THIS'LL DO.

I'M OKAY INSIDE MY ENERGY-COCOON, OF COURSE. BUT THIS ~~SAYS~~ IS ANOTHER MATTER. HOPE I DIDN'T WRCK ANYTHING VITAL.

THANK MY LUCKY STARS NOTHING ~~ALIVE~~ HAPPENED TO BE ANYWHERE NEAR!



THIS DOESN'T MAKE MY TASK ANY ~~EASIER~~. I CAN SEE MYSELF SAYING TO THE STRANGER, "HI, I'M THE GUY WHO WRECKED YOUR SHIP, MIND TAKING A ~~FIMP~~ WITH ME?"



BE THAT AS IT MAY, I'VE GOT TO FIND THE STRANGER.





WOW! HOW BIG IS THIS SHIP ANYWAY? NO WONDER I ACCIDENTALLY MATERIALIZED INSIDE IT--

-- I'VE BEEN ON PLANETS SMALLER THAN THIS.

WISH EON COULD SEND ME THE STRANGER'S ENERGY-SIGNALS. IT MAY TAKE DAYS TO FIND HIM!

WAIT A MINUTE--

-- I'M PICKING UP SOMETHING HIGHLY ENERGY!

WHOA--! THAT'S THE STRANGER I HAD THE IMPRESSION HE HAD A SOLID BODY!

WAIT-- SOMETHING'S HAPPENING. THE ENERGY'S CONVERTING TO MATTER!



HOLY--! HIS ISN'T THE ONLY BODY SOLIDIFYING. WHO IN BLAZES IS HE CRAFTING?





HE'S  
TAKING  
IT TO THE  
NEXT  
CHAMBER!



MY GOD--THOSE  
ARE  
WITCHERS!

ANY  
OF  
THEM--

--LYING  
THERE  
STILL AS  
DEAD!



**STRANGER!**

AMMMMAAA

EH? AN  
INTRUDER.

NOT JUST  
ANY  
INTRUDER,  
PAL. I'M--



I KNOW  
WHO YOU  
ARE. YOU  
ARE SON'S  
LADDER.

I ALSO KNOW  
WHAT YOU THINK:  
THAT I HAD  
SOMETHING TO DO  
WITH THE DEATHS  
OF THESE  
BEINGS.





DIDN'T YOU?

NO. I FOUND THEM THIS WAY.

AS WAS DEAD, TOO. AS WAS THE NEXT ONE, AND THE ONE AFTER THAT. TEN SO FAR.

I'VE BEEN GATHERING THEM. I SUSPECT THERE ARE MANY OTHERS.

WHY ARE YOU HERE, STRIPLING?

OH. I'M SUPPOSED TO FETCH YOU BACK TO YOUR LAB-WORLD OR ELSE THE OVER-MIND WILL KILL SOME REMAINS OF MINE.

I WAS ENGAGED IN MY USUAL SPECIMEN GATHERING EXPEDITION WHEN I HAPPENED UPON THE FIRST DEAD WATCHER.

I COULD NOT DETERMINE THE CAUSE OF HIS DEATH, SO I DECIDED TO TAKE HIM TO THE NEXT SECTOR WATCHER TO ASK HIM FOR ASSISTANCE.



THE OVER-MIND, HMM? I THOUGHT I WAS RID OF HIM. IT IS OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE.



WHAT PIQUES MY SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY NOW IS THE MYSTERY AT HAND. I INTEND TO PURSUE IT TO ITS RESOLUTION.

WOW, I CAN'T BLAME HIM FOR DEEMING THE DEATHS OF THESE WATCHERS MORE IMPORTANT THAN A REUNION WITH THE OVER-MIND, BUT...

NOB

LOOK, IF I HELP YOU SOLVE THIS MYSTERY, THEN WILL YOU--

I DO NOT NEED YOUR HELP, GROSS, I SAID.

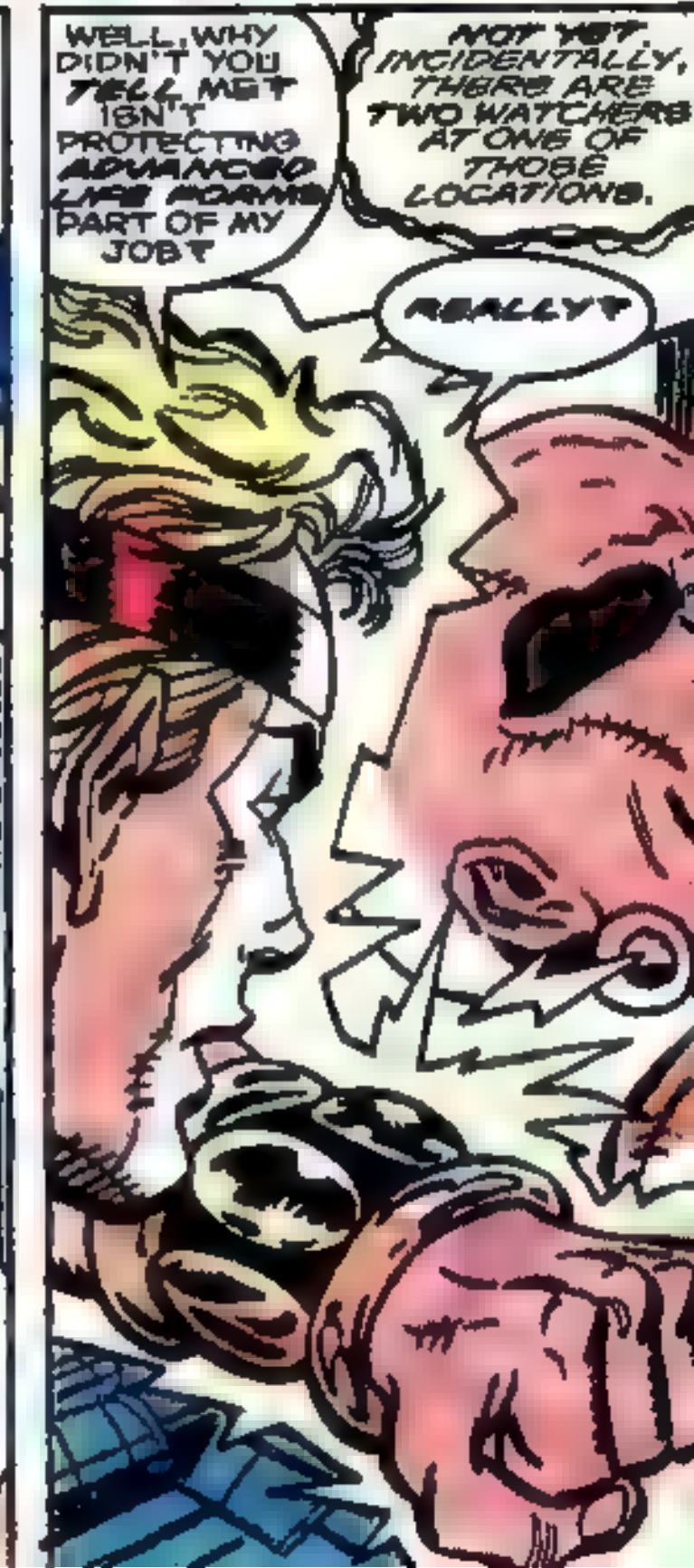


NOW. THIS IS QUABAR. I NEED TO KNOW THE LOCATIONS OF ALL WATCHERS WITHIN A THOUSAND LIGHT YEARS OF THE LAST GALACTIC COORDINATES YOU GAVE ME.

I CAN GIVE YOU THREE SUCH LOCATIONS.

SAY, DID YOU KNOW THAT A BUNCH OF WATCHERS HAVE RECENTLY DIED?

YES.



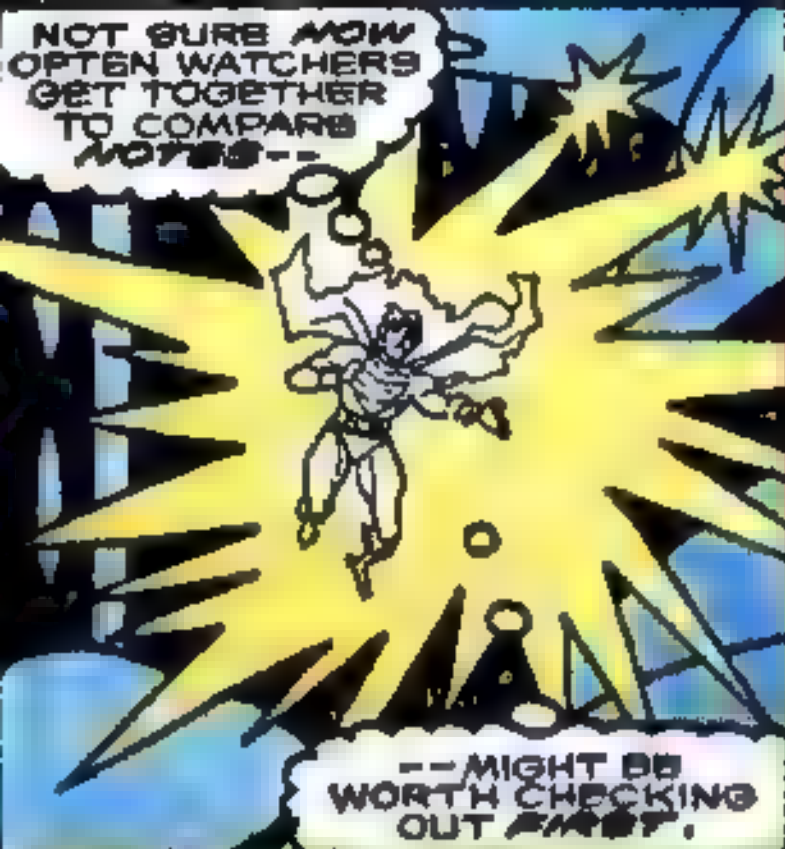
WELL, WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME? ISN'T PROTECTING ADVANCED LIFE FORMS PART OF MY JOB?

NOT YET. INCIDENTALLY, THERE ARE TWO WATCHERS AT ONE OF THOSE LOCATIONS.

REALLY?

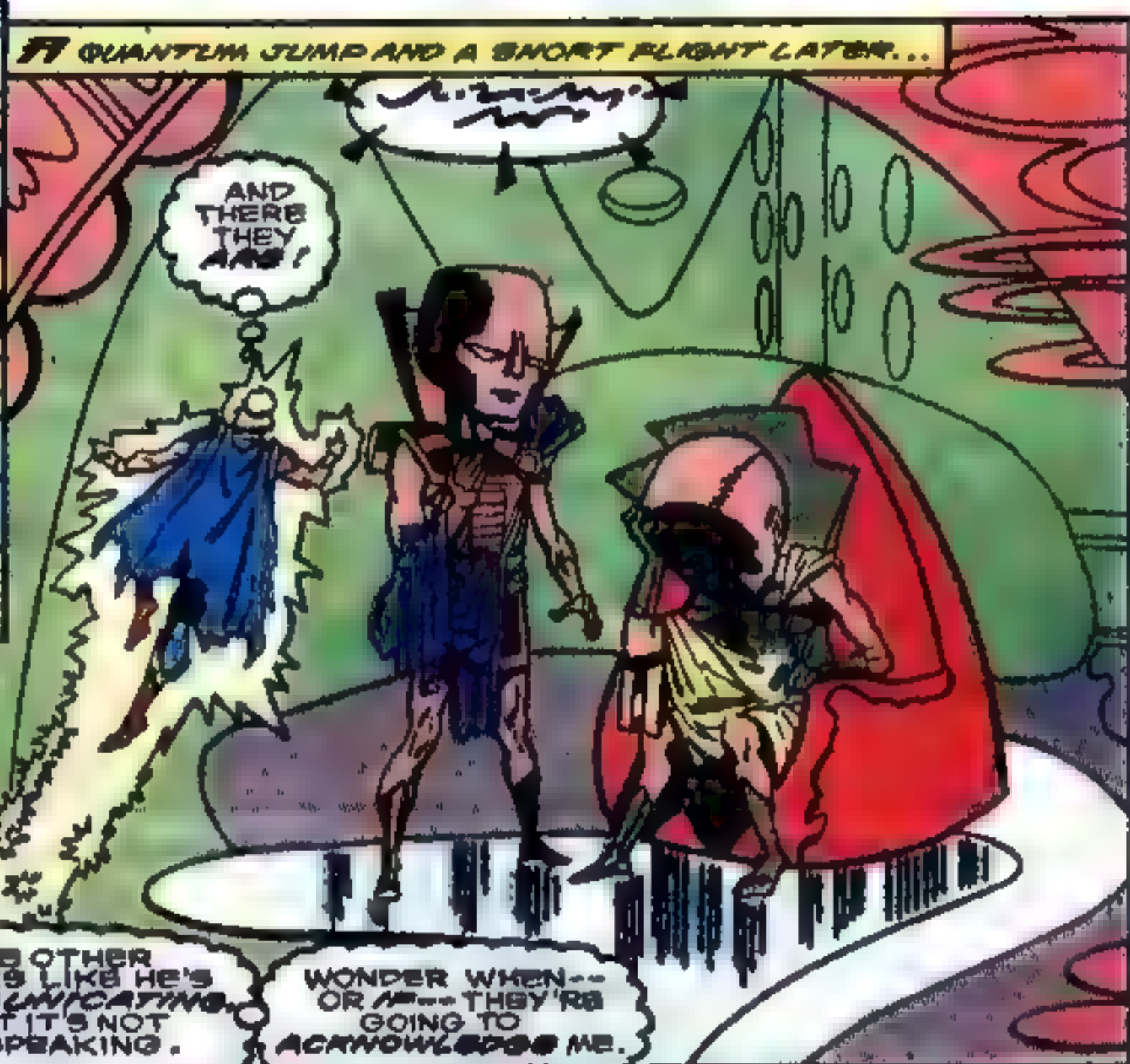


NOT SURE HOW  
OFTEN WATCHERS  
GET TOGETHER  
TO COMPARE  
NOTES--



--MIGHT BE  
WORTH CHECKING  
OUT FIRST.

A QUANTUM JUMP AND A SHORT FLIGHT LATER...



AND  
THERE  
THEY  
ARE!

WONDER WHAT'S  
THE STORY HERE...  
THE SEATED ONE  
LOOKS KIND OF  
DEPRESSED.

THE OTHER  
LOOKS LIKE HE'S  
COMMUNICATING,  
BUT IT'S NOT  
BY SPEAKING.

WONDER WHEN--  
OR IF-- THEY'RE  
GOING TO  
ACKNOWLEDGE ME.

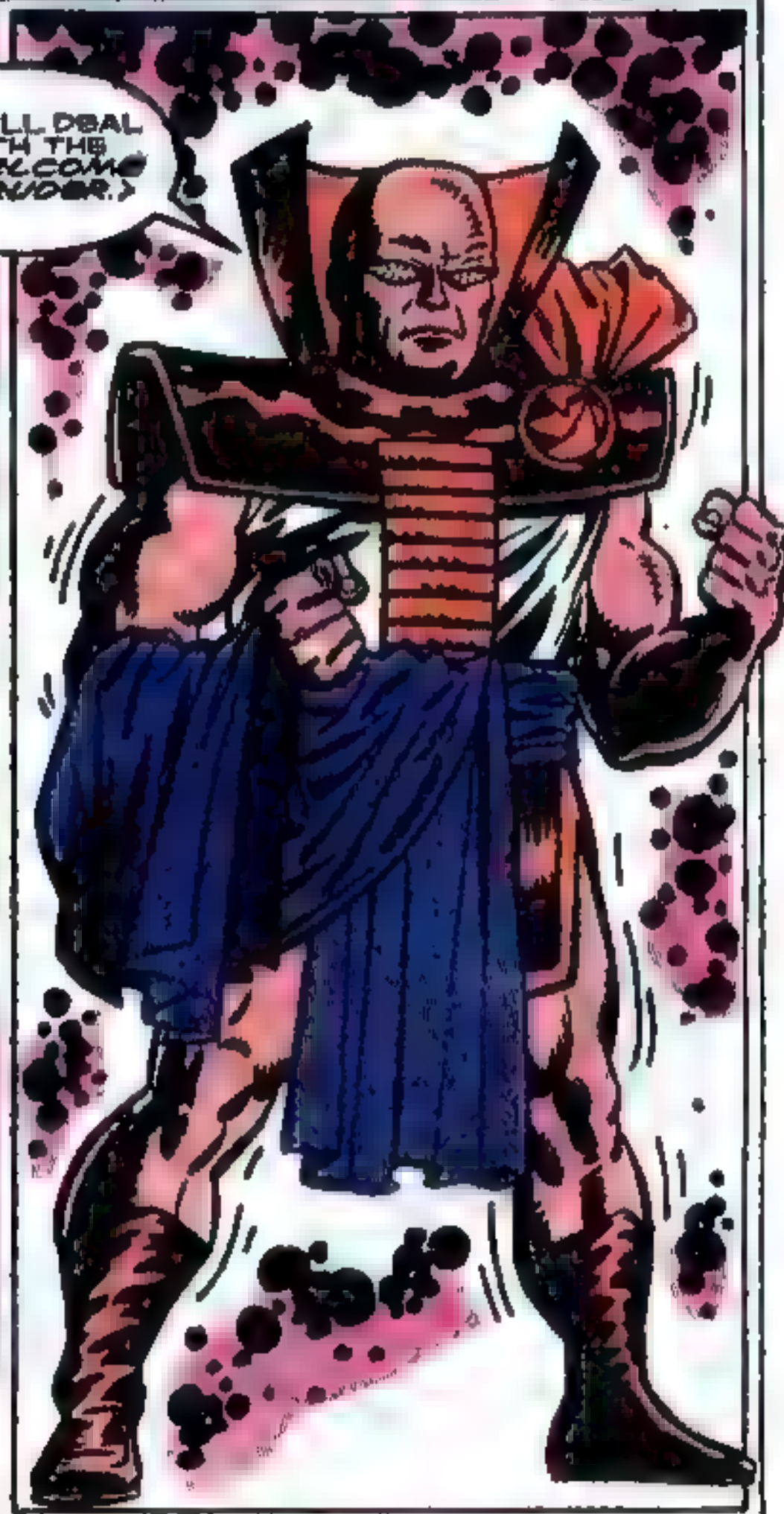
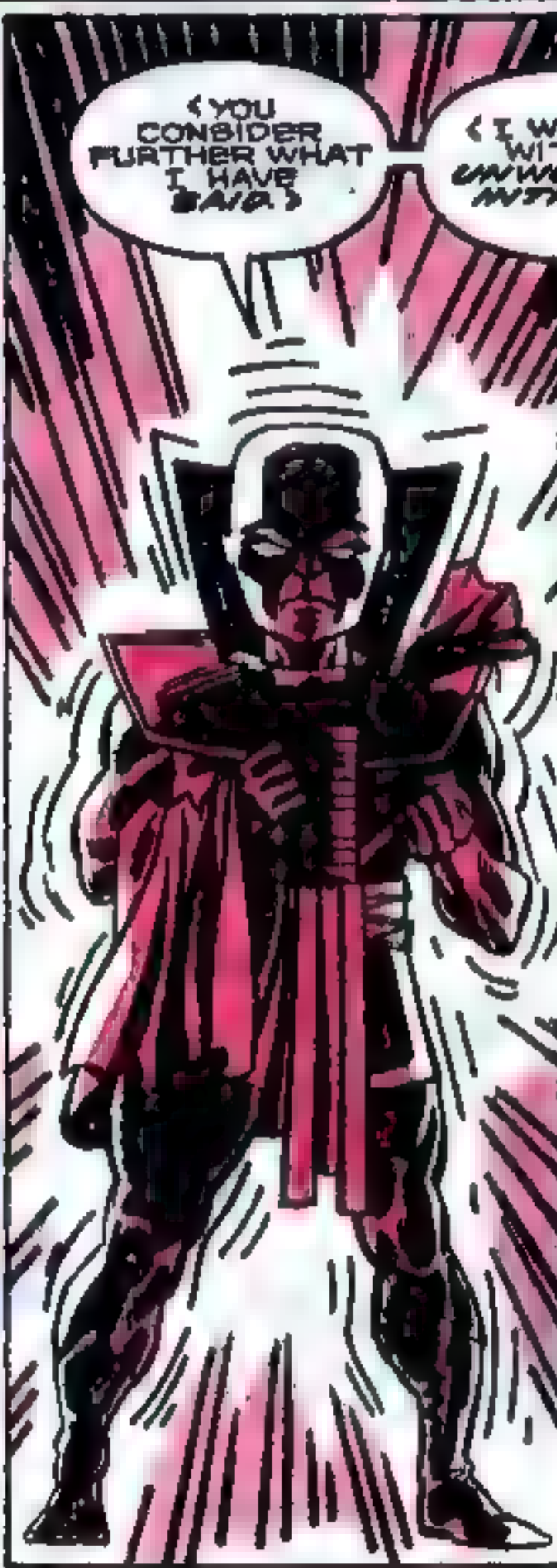
AHH! (IT IS AS I  
SAID, CACU,  
IN OBSERVING,  
WE ARE  
OBSERVED)\*

(THIS  
ENERGY-  
MANIPULATING  
ENTITY IS  
UNFAMILIAR  
TO ME.)



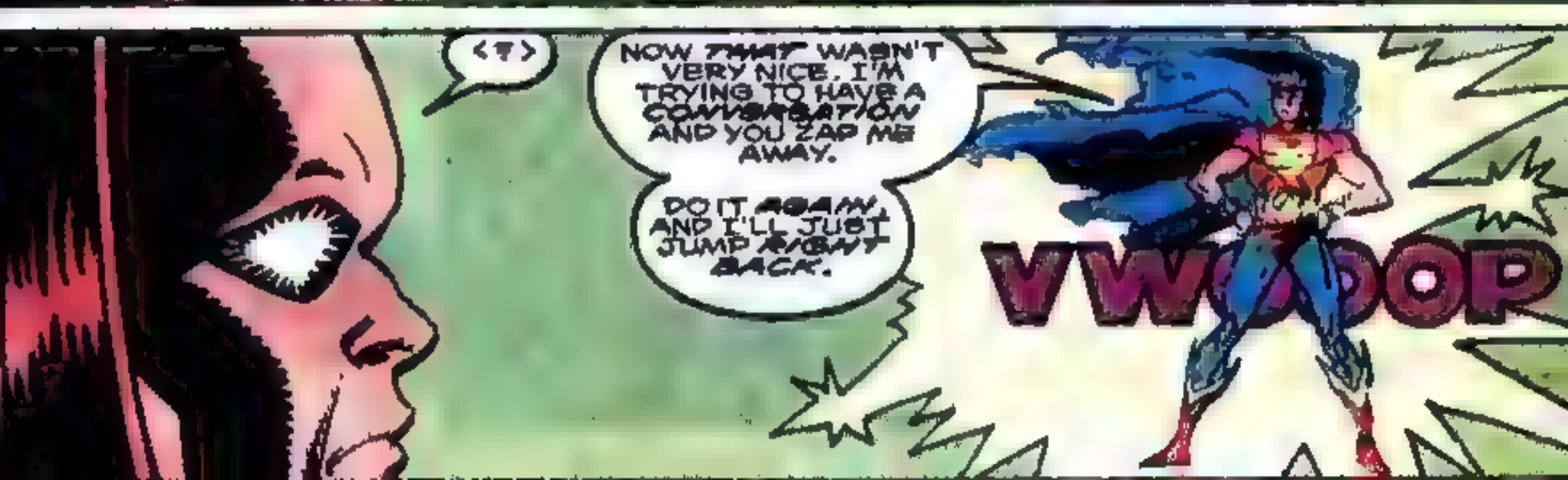
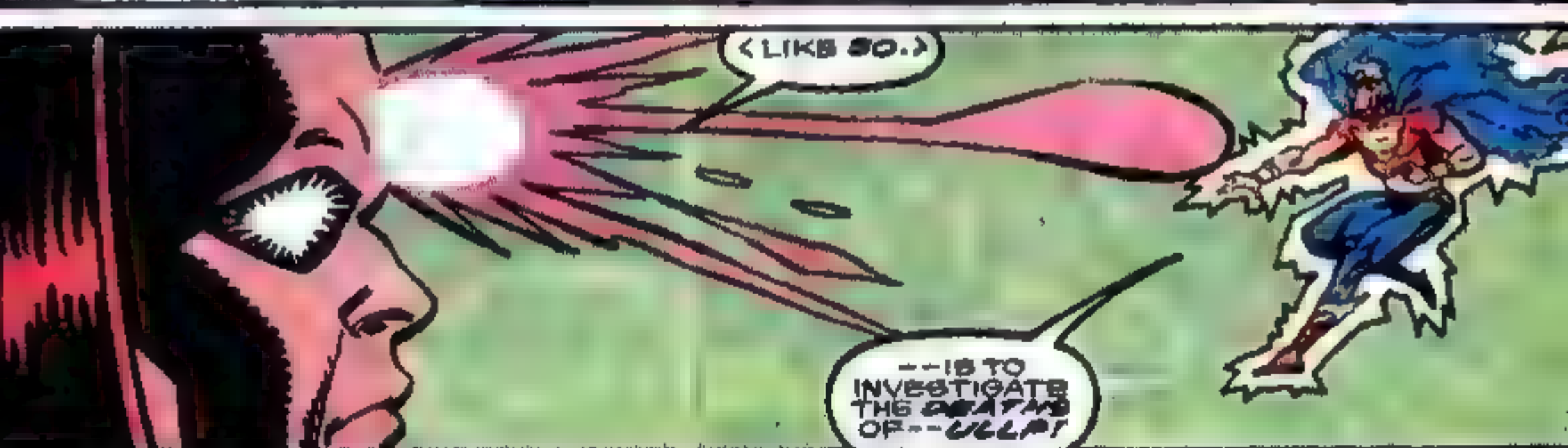
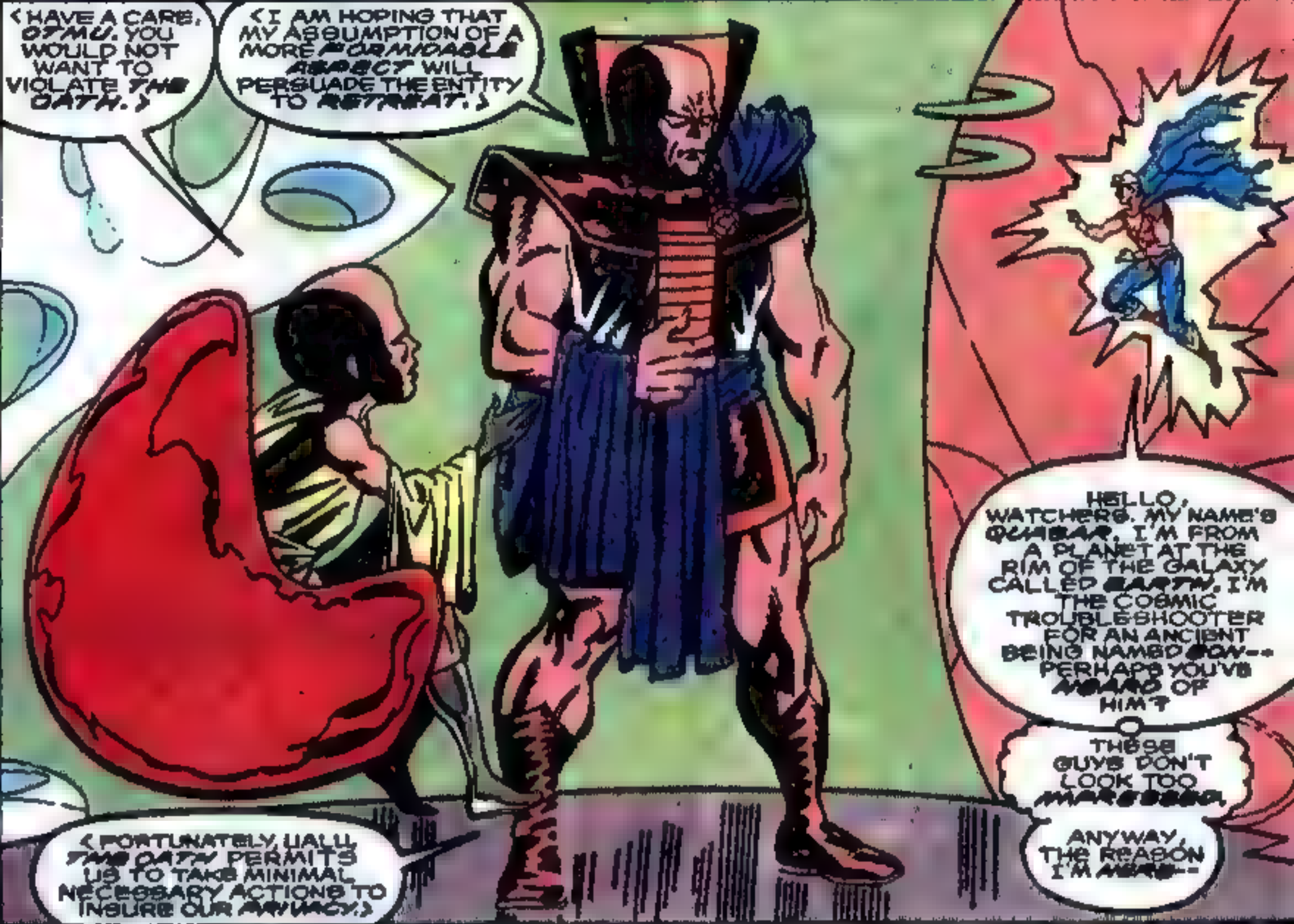
(YOU  
CONSIDER  
FURTHER WHAT  
I HAVE  
SAID.)

(I WILL DEAL  
WITH THE  
UNWELCOME  
INTRUDER.)

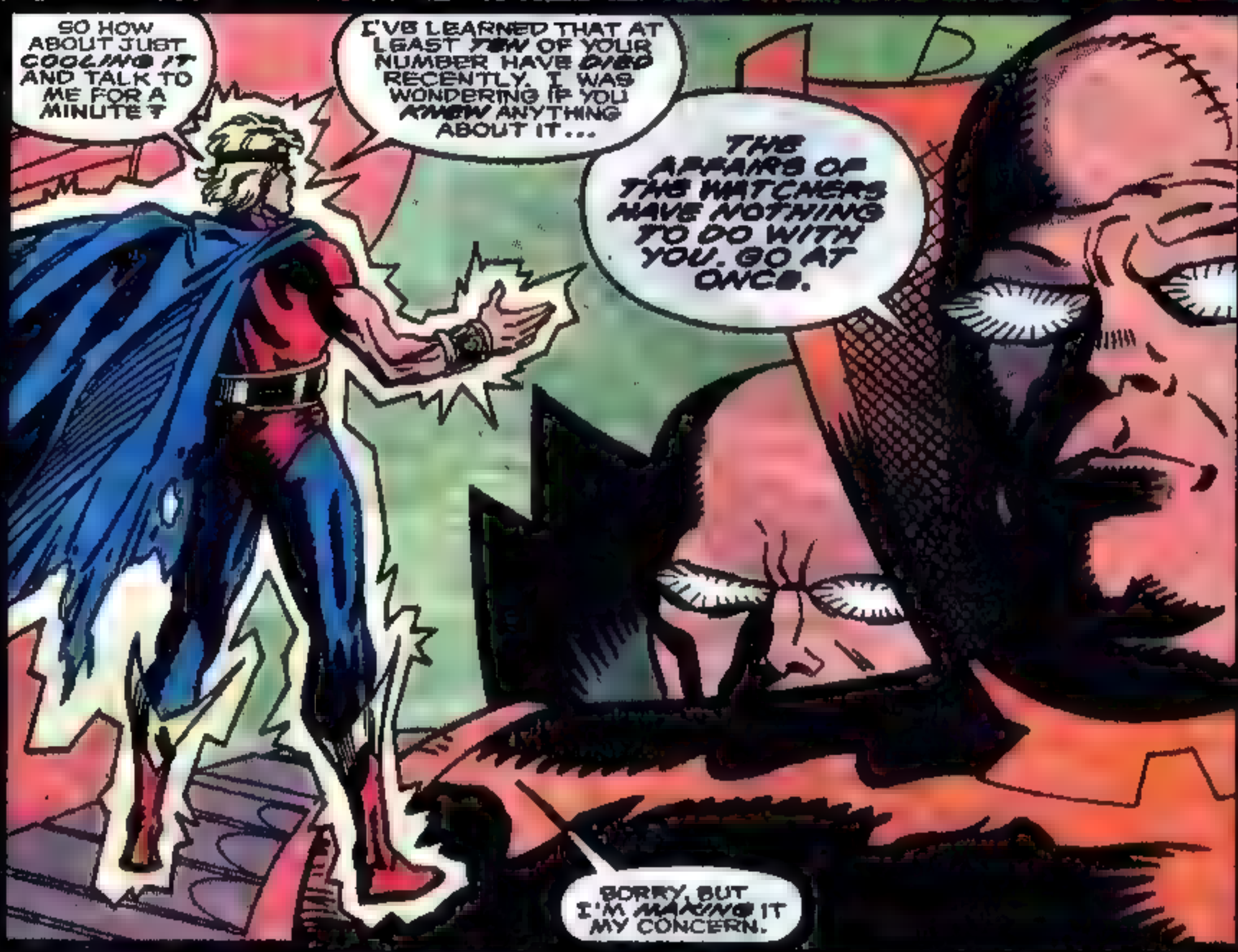


\*TRANSLATED  
FROM THE  
WATCHERS'  
LANGUAGE.







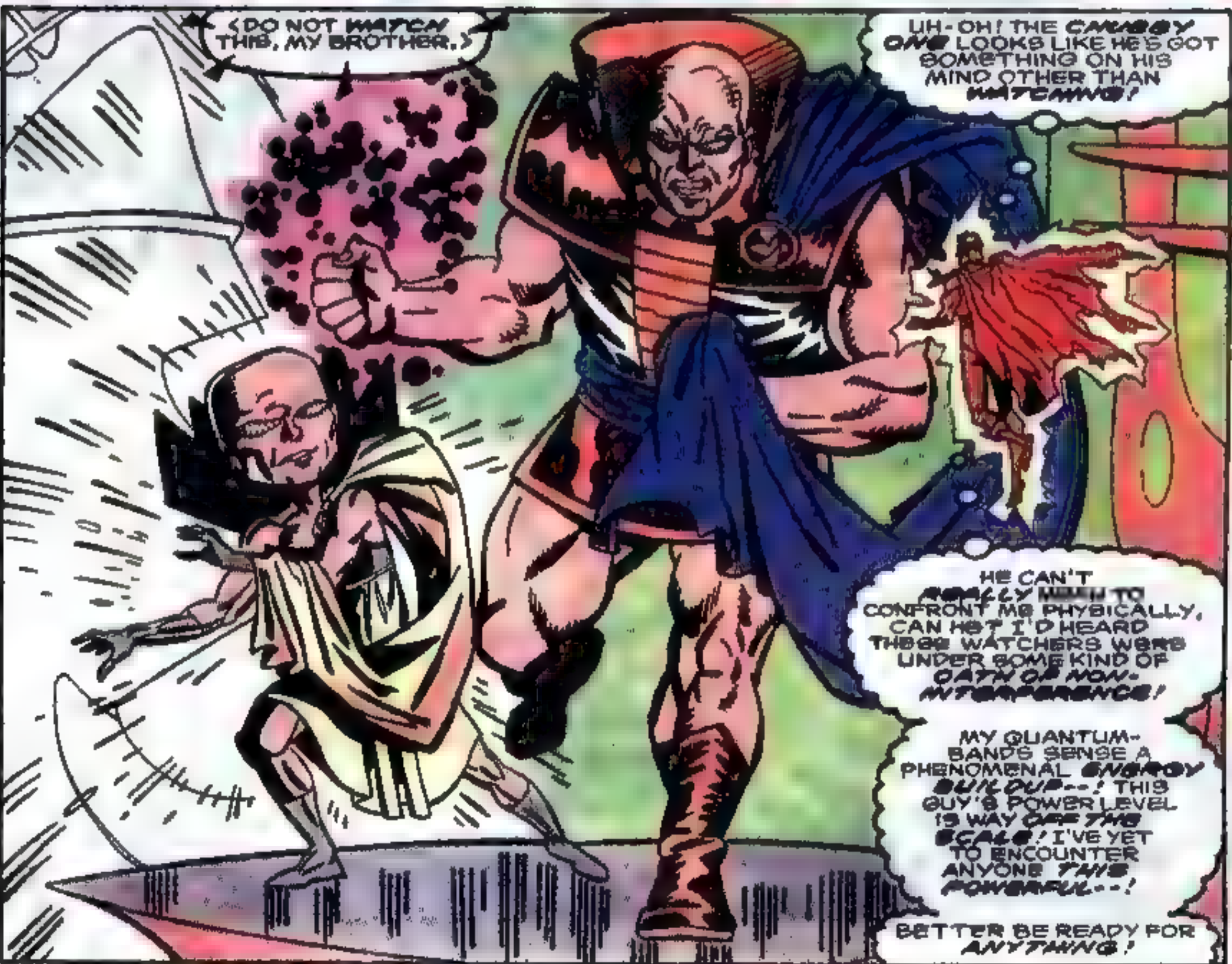


SO HOW ABOUT JUST COOLING IT AND TALK TO ME FOR A MINUTE?

I'VE LEARNED THAT AT LEAST ~~Few~~ OF YOUR NUMBER HAVE ~~died~~ RECENTLY. I WAS WONDERING IF YOU ~~KNOW~~ ANYTHING ABOUT IT...

THE AFFAIRS OF THE WATCHERS HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU. GO AT ONCE.

SORRY, BUT I'M MAKING IT MY CONCERN.



(DO NOT WATCH THIS, MY BROTHER.)

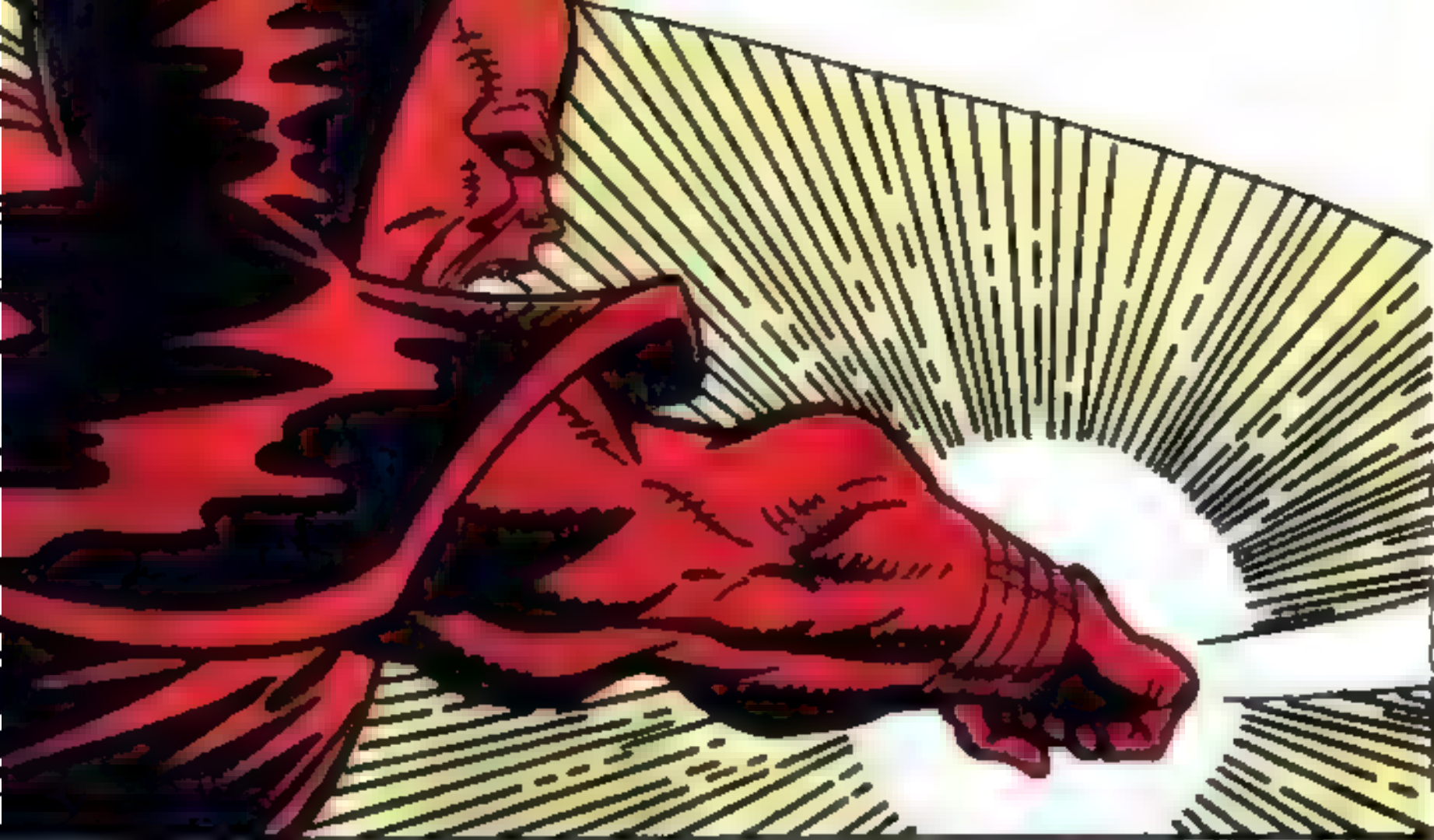
UH-OH! THE ~~Crazy~~ ONE LOOKS LIKE HE'S GOT SOMETHING ON HIS MIND OTHER THAN WATCHING!

HE CAN'T ~~really mean to~~ CONFRONT ME PHYSICALLY, CAN HE? I'D HEARD THESE WATCHERS WERE UNDER SOME KIND OF OATH OF NON-INTERFERENCE!

MY QUANTUM-BANDS SENSE A PHENOMENAL ~~energy~~ BUILDUP--! THIS GUY'S POWER LEVEL IS WAY ~~off the~~ SCALE! I'VE YET TO ENCOUNTER ANYONE THIS POWERFUL--!

BETTER BE READY FOR ANYTHING!



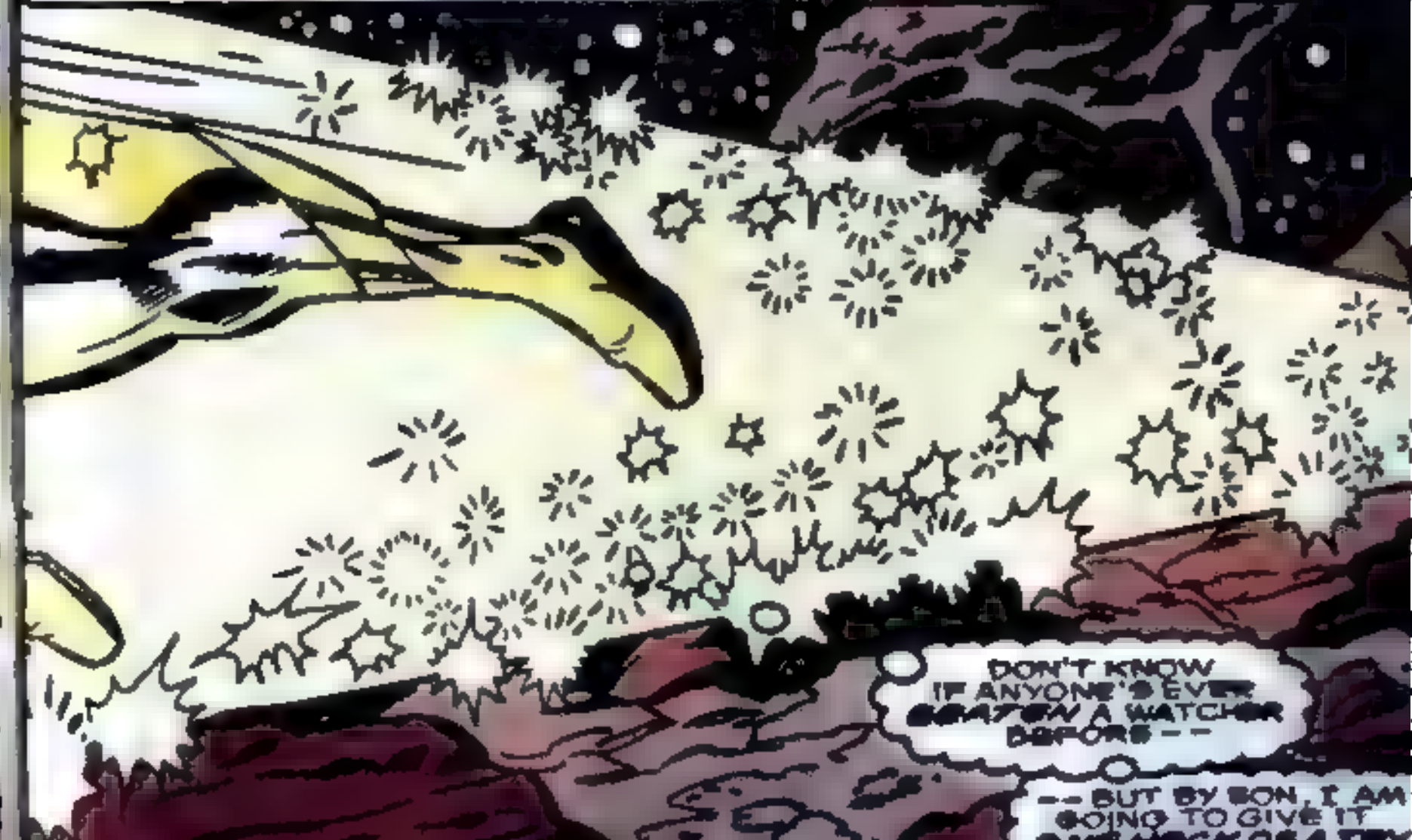
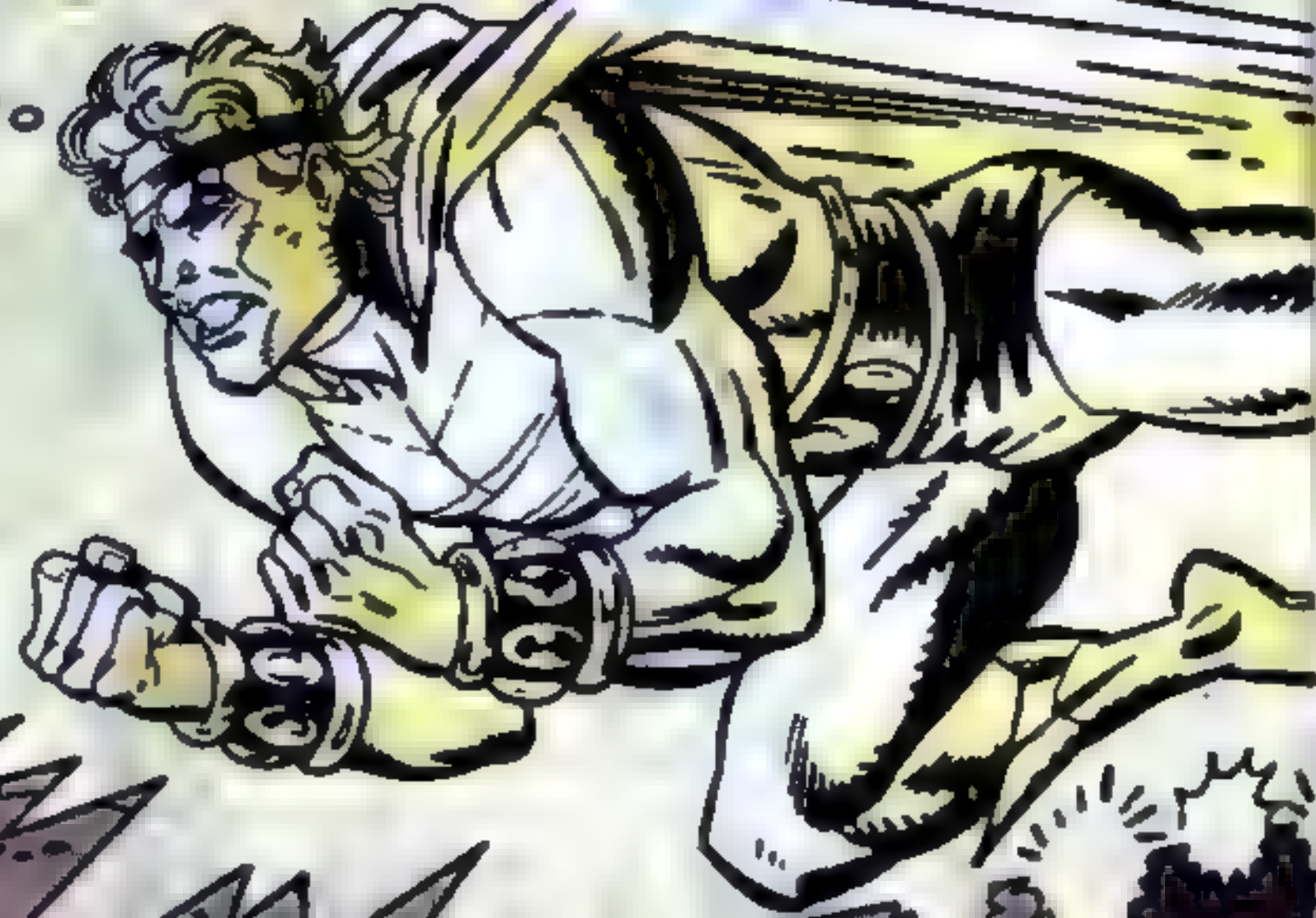




HAD MY EYES WIDE OPEN--  
AND STILL NEVER SAW  
IT COMING!

WELL, MR.  
GATH ON NON-  
INTERFERENCE--

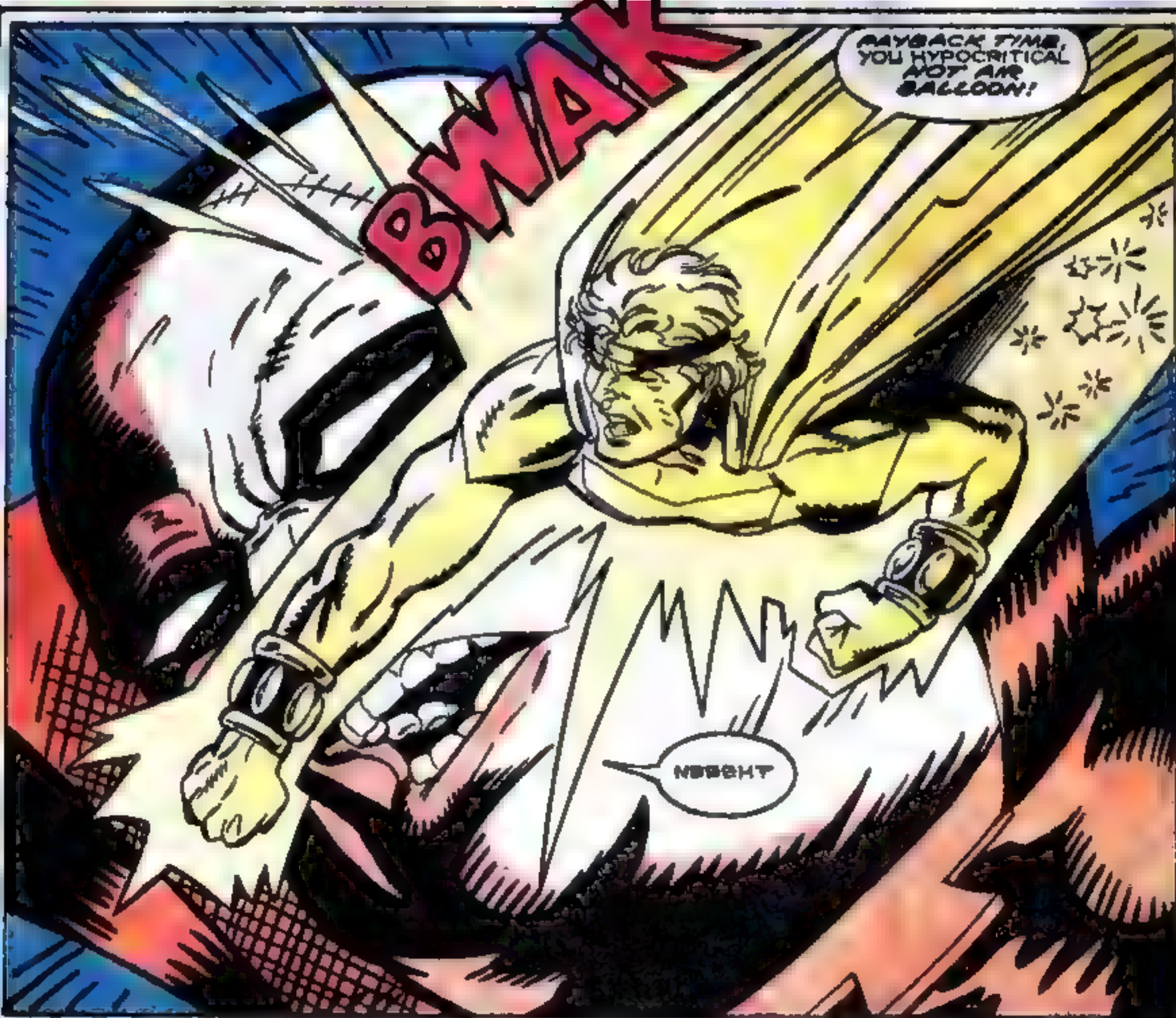
--YOU'VE  
GONE AND  
GOTTEN ME  
MAD!



DON'T KNOW  
IF ANYONE'S EVER  
BEATEN A WATCHER  
BEFORE--

--BUT BY SON, I AM  
GOING TO GIVE IT  
ONE HECK OF A TRY





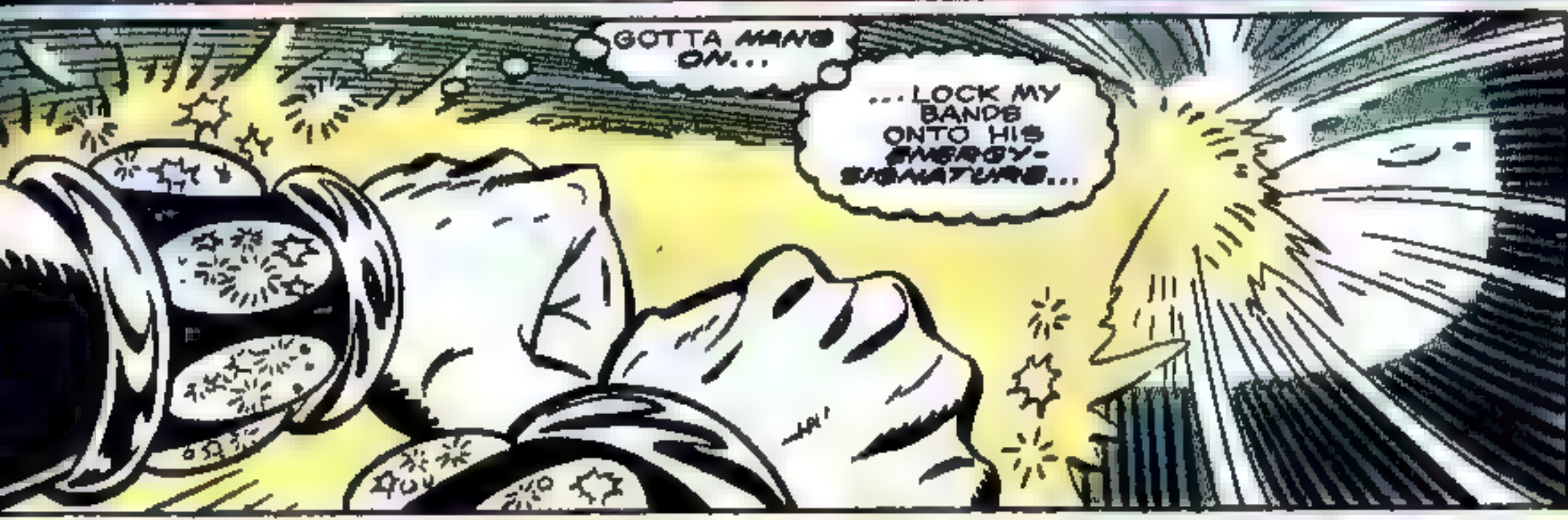




AAAAH!

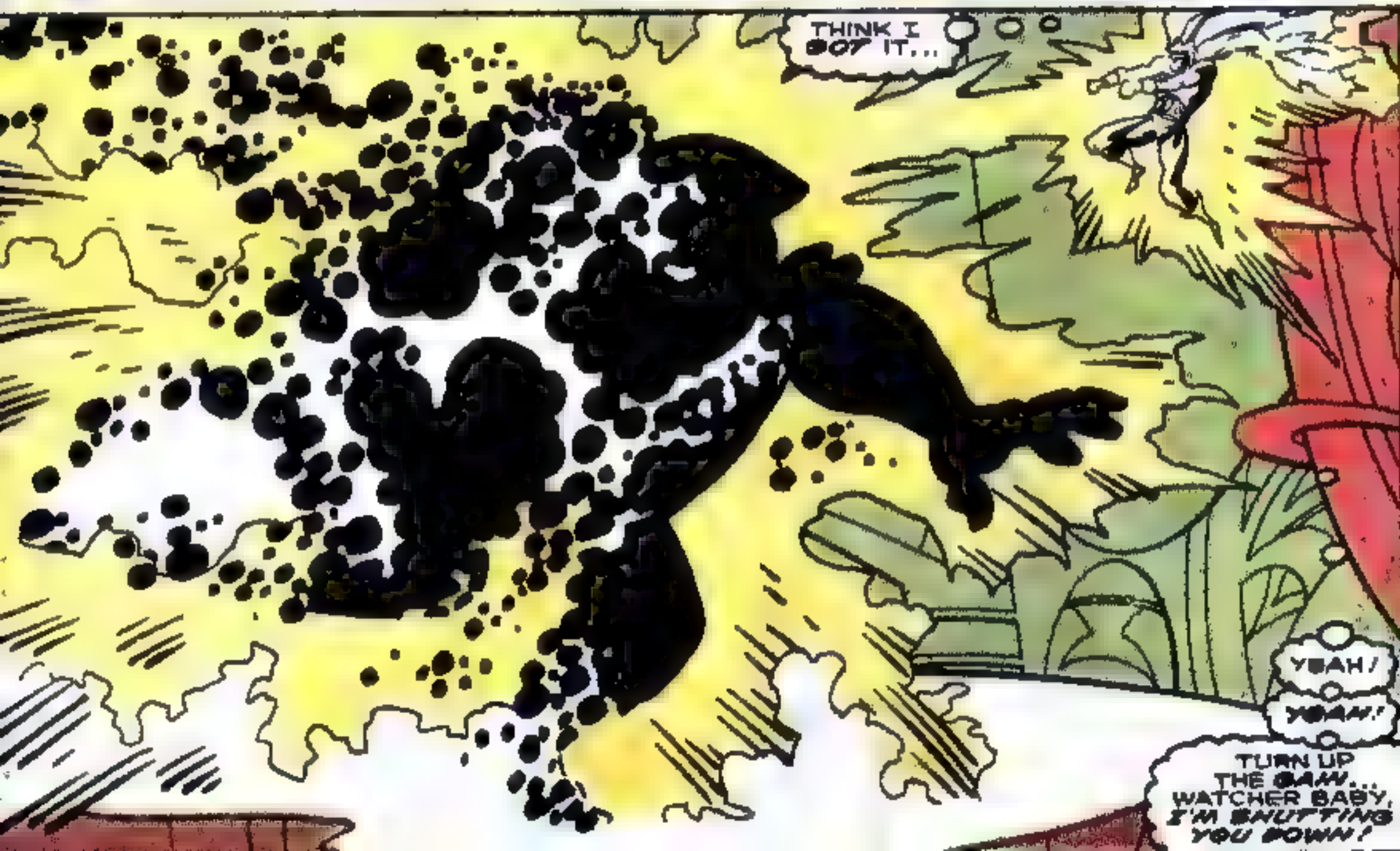
PHASED RIGHT  
THROUGH ME--  
ENERGY-SHIELD  
AND ALL--

-- FEEL LIKE  
I'M GOING  
TO ~~POSS~~  
OUT!!



GOTTA HOLD  
ON...

...LOCK MY  
HANDS  
ONTO HIS  
ENERGY-  
SIGNATURE...

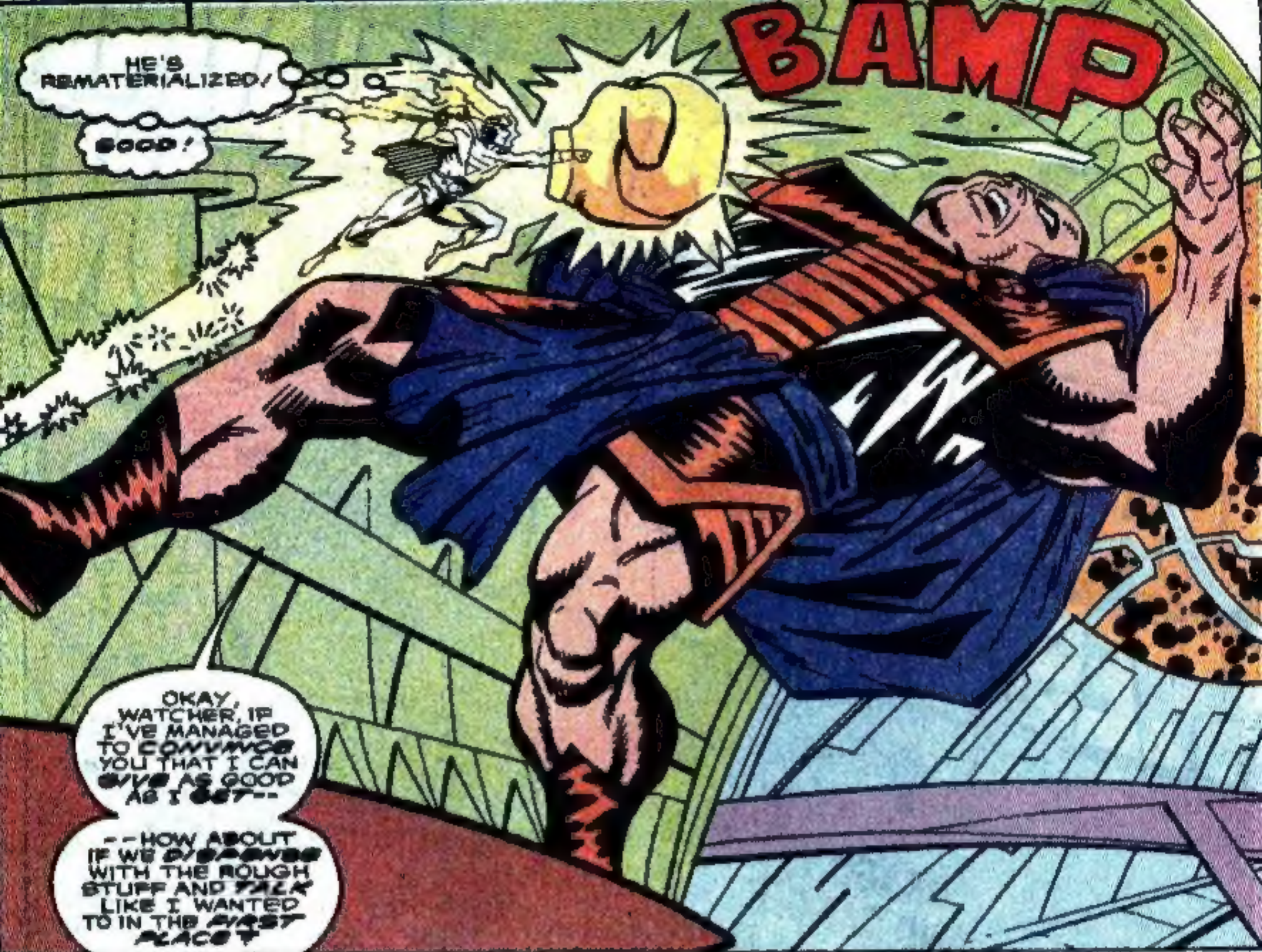


THINK I  
GOT IT...

YEAH/  
YEAH!

TURN UP  
THE GAAW...  
WATCHER BABY,  
I'M SHUTTING  
YOU DOWN!













HOLY SHIVOLA---! HE JUST COLLAPSED---! DID WE... DID WE KILL HIM?!

NO, HE KILLED HIMSELF.

OTMU CAME HERE TO TELL ME ABOUT THE LATEST PHILOSOPHICAL REVOLUTION AMONG OUR KIND--THE DOCTRINE OF ULTIMATE NON-INTERFERENCE.

OUR RACE'S OATH IS TO NEVER INTERFERE WITH WHAT WE OBSERVE IN ORDER TO KEEP OUR OBSERVATIONS PURE, BUT OTMU REASONED THAT THE VERY ACT OF OBSERVATION ALTERS THAT WHICH WE OBSERVE.

ERGO THE ONLY WAY TO NOT INTERFERE IS TO NOT OBSERVE, AND THE ONLY WAY TO NOT OBSERVE IS TO NOT EXIST.

SO FAR TEN BILLION OF US HAVE EMBRACED OTMU'S DOCTRINE AND HAVE WILLED OURSELVES UNALIVE.



NOW SO HAS OTMU.

WOW! LOOKS LIKE THE MYSTERY'S SOLVED, STRANGER.

INDEED.

SO HOW ABOUT ACCOMPANYING ME BACK TO YOUR LAB - WORLD? PLEASE...?

HMMM... VERY WELL.



UTILIZING THEIR OWN METHODS OF INTERSTELLAR TRAVEL, THE RELUCTANT ALLIES MATERIALIZE ON THE STRANGER'S HOMEWORLD...

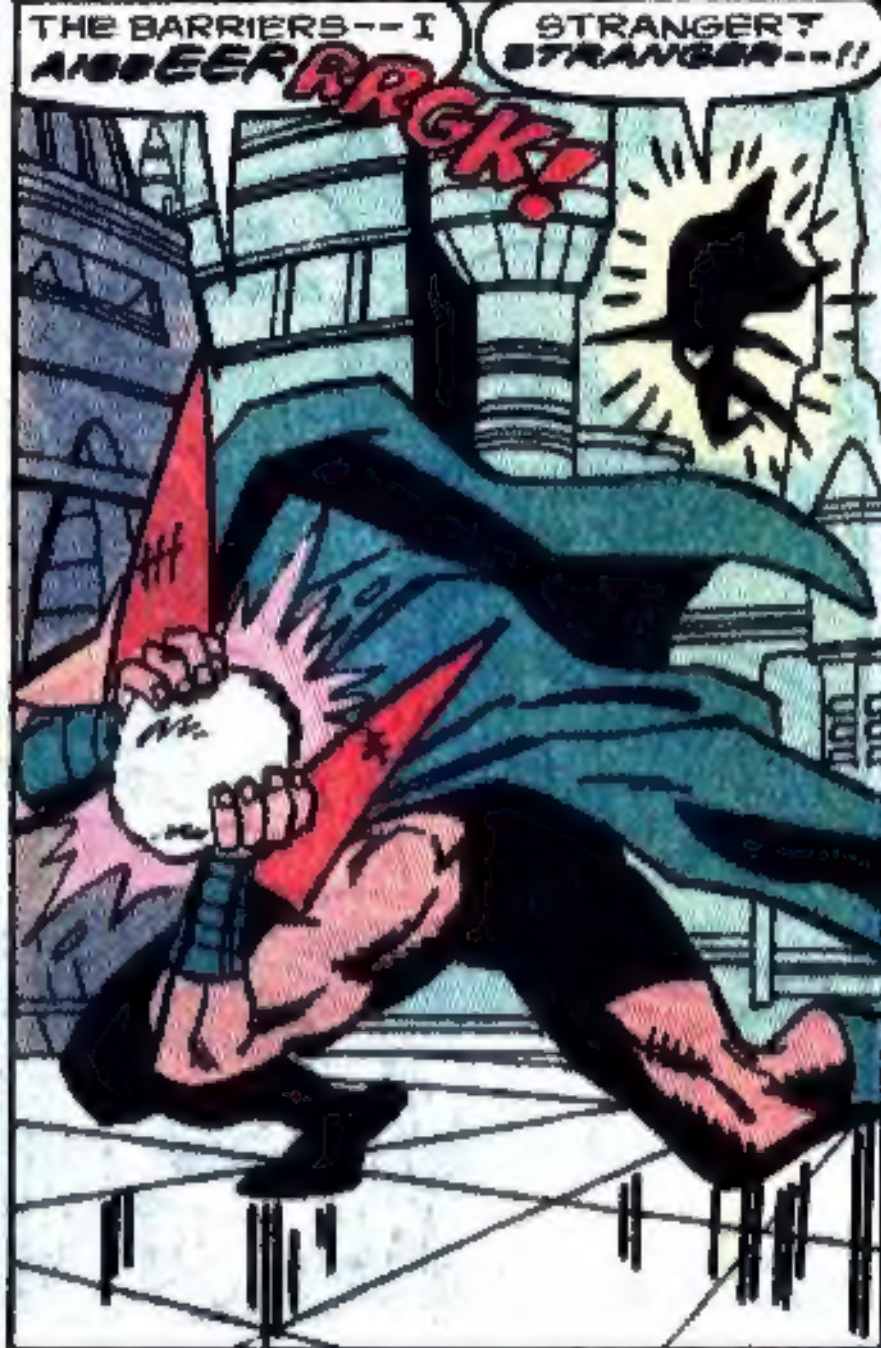


THINGS HAVE BEEN HAPPENING SO FAST, I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO REALLY SINK IN...

DID I REALLY GO TOE-TO-TOE WITH A WATCHER?



SOMETHING IS AMISS.



THE BARRIERS-- I AMBEEER ARGK!

STRANGER? STRANGER--!!



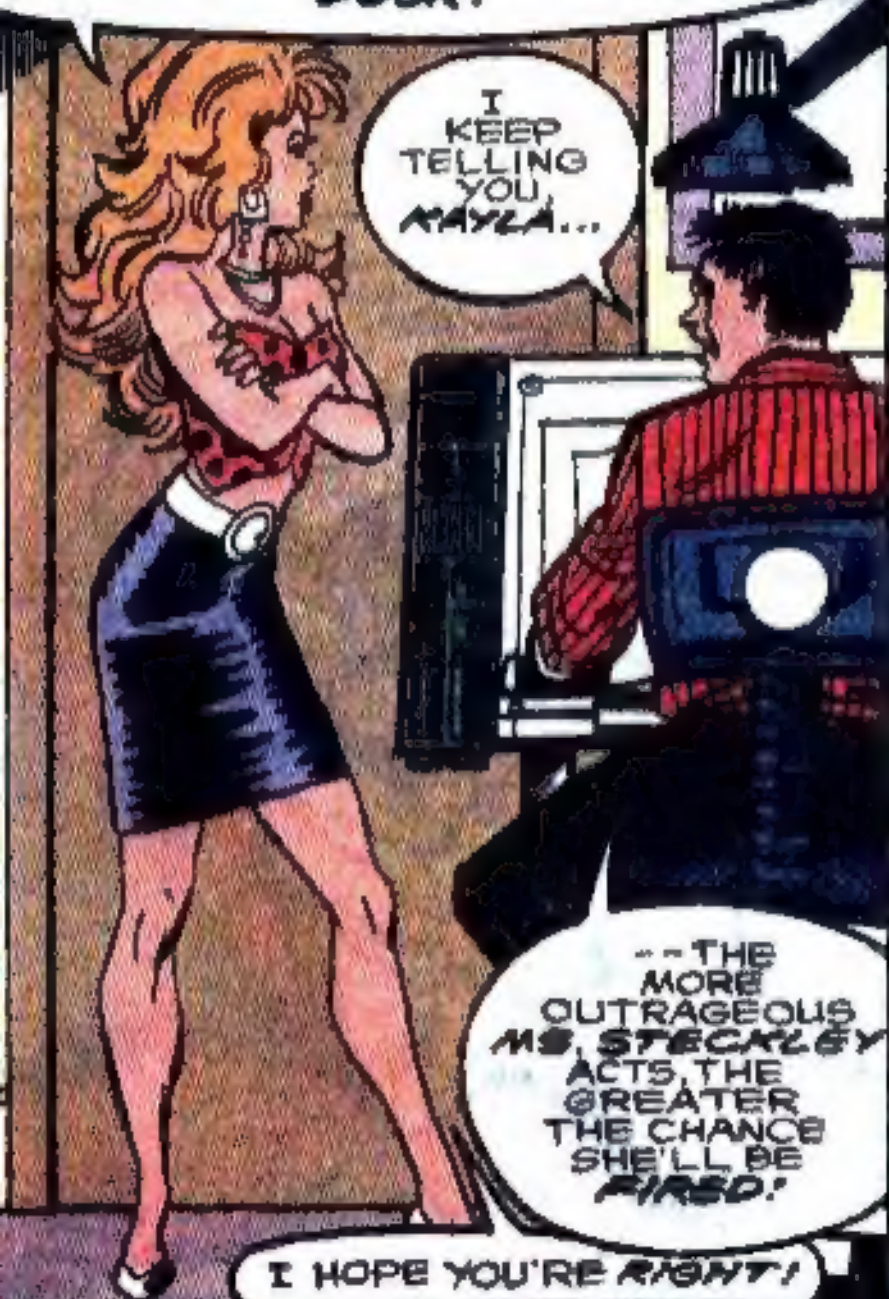
HE WALKED STRAIGHT INTO MY TRAP!



THE STRANGER IS MINE!

MEANWHILE ON EARTH, QUASAR'S BUSINESS ASSOCIATES AT VAUGHN SECURITY SYSTEMS COPE WITH HIS ABSENCE...

I HATE IT! THE NERVE OF THAT WOMAN! PROCLAIMING TO US THAT SHE'S GOING TO USE THE BOSS'S OFFICE--AND THEN LOCKING THE DOOR!



I KEEP TELLING YOU, RAYLA...

--THE MORE OUTRAGEOUS MS. STECKLEY ACTS, THE GREATER THE CHANCE SHE'LL BE FIRED!

I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT!

BEYOND THE LOCKED DOOR...

MY FOOLHARDY CO-WORKERS THINK MY BID FOR VAUGHN'S INNER OFFICE HAS TO DO WITH WORK SPACE...



NO... IT'S THE SPACE BEHIND THIS BOOKCASE THAT INTERESTS ME.



HELLO, EON...? YOU HAVE A VISITOR...

NEXT: THE DOUBLE-LENGTH CONCLUSION TO JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY!